

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8284

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 1754

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN KS. EI

SUBJECT: REACTION TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT

REF: STATE 211862

1. IRISH MEDIA CARRIED FULL REPORTS OF PANMUNJOM INCIDENT, MOSTLY WITHOUT COMMENT. TWO OF THE THREE MAJOR DAILIES HAD EDITORIALS, BOTH CONDEMNING THE NORTH KOREAN ACTION. THE IRISH PRESS (AUG.20) SAID: "THE EXCUSE THAT THE TROOPS WERE CUTTING DOWN A TREE THAT WAS UNDER NORTH KOREAN PROTECTION IS FLIMSY ENOUGH BUT TO USE IT AS A BASIS FOR PUTTING HER FORCES ON A FULL ALERT IS, TO SAY THE LEAST, COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE AND HARDLY IN KEEPING WITH THE PLATITUDES THAT NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVES ARE MOUTHING AT THE CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES IN COLOMBO." THE IRISH INDEPENDENT (AUG. 25) SAID: "BUT FOR A BRIEF FEW DAYS WE ARE ALL SUDDENLY REMINDED OF THE KOREAN WAR AND OF THE FACT THAT KOREA IS PARTITIONED INTO TWO MUTUALLY ANTAGONISTIC PARTS. OF NORTH KOREA IT CAN ONLY BE SAID THAT IS RULED BY A VERY ODD CHARACTER INDEED; HIS REGULAR WORLD-WIDE ADVERTISEMENTS PLACED IN ALL KINDS OF NEWSPAPERS AND STIFF WITH PRAISE OF HIMSELF CONTAIN MATERIAL WHICH IS VERY MUCH AT ODDS WITH WHAT IS KNOWN OF HIS AUTHORITARIAN RULE AND WITH HIS, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSTRUCTION OF A NETWORK OF UNDERGROUND TUNNELS AT THE NORTH-SOUTH BORDER

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DESIGNED APPARENTLY TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK INTO SOUTH KOREA. PLAINLY

HE WOULD TAKE OVER THE SOUTH IF HE COULD GET AWAY WITH IT."

2. WE HAVE RECEIVED A LETTER ON THE INCIDENT ADDRESSED TO THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE OFFICIAL SINN FEIN, WHICH IS THE MARXIST POLITICAL WING OF THE OFFICIAL IRA. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER IS OBVIOUSLY STRAIGHT FROM PYONGYANG, AND IS NOT EVEN A GOOD ENGLISH TRANSLATION. IT STARTS: "THE RECENT WELL-ORCHESTRATED TREE-FELLING INCIDENT IN THE DE-MILITARIZED ZONE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA IS PART OF A CONCERTED ATTEMPT TO BLACKMAIL THE ENTIRE KOREAN PEOPLE. IT COMES AT A TIME WHEN PROPOSALS FOR THE PEACEFUL RE-UNIFICATION OF KOREA ARE GAINING INCREASING SUPPORT THERE AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD." (POUCHING COPY.)

3. COMMENT: FOR THOSE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE INTRICACIES OF IRISH AFFAIRS, THE OFFICIAL SINN FEIN IS BY FAR THE LEADING MARXIST/LEFTIST ORGANIZATION IN IRELAND, THOUGH TINY IN NUMBERS. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT IT IS UNDER ANY CONTROL, SOVIET OR CHINESE. IT IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TROTSKYITE. IT IS USUALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH IRISH EVENTS, ESP. NORTHERN IRELAND, AND STRAYS AWKWARDLY INTO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ONLY INFREQUENTLY. THE LETTER IS THE FIRST COMMUNICATION WE HAVE HAD FROM THE OFFICIAL SINN FEIN SINCE VIETNAM WAR DAYS, AND WHY IT SHOULD COME ABOUT OVER THIS PARTICULAR INCIDENT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR. THERE IS NO NORTH (OR SOUTH, FOR THAT MATTER) KOREAN PRESENCE IN IRELAND AT ALL, AND IRISH INTEREST IN KOREAN AFFAIRS CAN BE MEASURED IN MILLIMETERS. WE CAN EXPECT THE OFFICIAL SINN FEIN TO PEDDLE THEIR STORY IN THEIR VARIOUS PROPAGANDA ORGANS, NONE OF WHICH HAVE ANY APPRECIABLE INFLUENCE.
CURLEY

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